MODERN ATHENS

GEORGE HORTON

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MODERN ATHENS

An Old Byzantine Church.

MODERN ATHENS

BY

GEORGE HORTON

ILLUSTRATED BY

CORWIN KNAPP LINSON

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ILLUSTRATIONS

An Old Byzantine Church . . . . *Frontispiece*

Page

A Typical Street—Kolokotrones Street—Late Afternoon 1

General View of Athens and the Acropolis . . . 5

Discussing Affairs 10

In Front of the Stadium 13

A Water-Seller on the Street 17

Spiro Loues, Winner of the Marathon Road Race in the Olympian Games, 1896 19

Constitution Square—Late Afternoon 20

A Major of the Greek Army 21

At the Zappeion 23

A Sunset 25

A Siesta at Noonday 28

The Theseion, from the Gardens 32

The Resort of the Lowly—Marionettes . . . 37

A Goatherd 41

Koulouria! 43

Typical Greek House 49

Houses on the Side of the Acropolis 53

Street Leading down from the Acropolis . . . 55

ILLUSTRATIONS

	P
Smoking a Narghile	57
Under Her Own Vine	58
An Athens Kitchen	59
For the Baker's Oven	60
A Greek Papas	61
In His Stately Flowing Robe	62
A Wedding among the People	64
A Funeral Procession	66
A March Day—Place de la Constitution	72
Near an Old Mosque	75
The Nike Apteros and the Propylæa, Acropolis	86
Choragic Monument of Lysicrates	88

A Typical Street—Kolokotrones Street, Late Afternoon.

MODERN ATHENS

I

FEW people, save Greeks, know that modern Athens is in reality two cities, each differing from the other in climate, in traditions, and, to a great extent, in character of population. Winter Athens, roughly speaking, is the resort of tourists, diplomats, and climate-seekers. It is a European city where one eats course dinners at the Angleterre Hotel, attends service at the English Church, dances the barn dance at Madame Schliemann's, and plays charades in the library of the American School. In winter Athens one talks English or bad French. Even your Greek friends persist in greeting you with a "bon zoor, moshiou," when you meet them in the street, and you go to the Opera House to hear the "Chimes of Normandy" sung by a company from Paris. The climate of the European period is delightfully cool, with frequent rains. The genuine Greeks, who have no fires in their houses, and no heating apparatus other than portable braziers, will tell you that it is bitter cold, although the thermometer may deny that the freezing-

point has been reached. At this season the gentlemen of the place stride about in long circular cloaks, reaching to their heels, garments similar to the military waterproofs of the officers. The latter are fond of pulling their hoods over their heads when it rains, and of pumping downward with the handles of their swords as they strut about, tenting their cloaks out behind. Groups of stalwart evzones, arrayed strangely like ballet dancers, can be seen sitting on the sunny side of cafés.

This state of affairs lasts from about October 1st till May 1st. Then all is changed. The diplomats and the climate-seekers hie them away, and the tourists cease to come. And now the Greeks swarm in from Egypt, from Turkey, and from Roumania, and fill the hotels. They drink resin wine and masticha at a penny the glass; they eat pilaff, stuffed courgas, and fish with garlic-sauce, by candle-light in the squares; they attend the open-air theatres to hear the divine Paraskevopoulou in the "Medea," or the wonderful Pantopoulos in some island comedy, and everybody talks Greek. Your Greek friends, when they meet you in the streets, salute you with "καλ' ἡμέρα, κύριε" (Good-day, sir). So, you see, if you have not lingered on into the summer you know little of the real modern Athens. This, too, is the Athens of classic dust and of purple sunsets. And how suddenly the transformation from winter to summer takes place! You are walking about jauntily with no overcoat, despite the fact that the Greeks are

bundled up, and that they tell you, shiveringly, " It's very cold." You wait and wait for the advent of winter and then, all at once, the natives are abroad in light clothing and they cry out, gayly, " Spring has come ! " And lo ! the almond-trees have shaken out their scented kerchiefs and the anemones are blooming by the roadside.

Let us suppose that we are approaching the harbor of the Piræus, on a visit to summer Athens. We stand upon the prow of our ship that is purring through the sky-blue waters of the Mediterranean, and strain eager eyes for the first view of the famous city. Presently there is a shout of " There it is ! there it is ! " and we gaze in the direction indicated by a dozen extended arms, but we see nothing. " Where ? Where ? " we ask eagerly, for a dream that has haunted us since childhood is now about to be realized.

" Do you see that great column of dust yonder ? " someone kindly explains. " That is where Athens is."

A sea-scape, softly, deeply blue; a landscape misty gray, piled thick with purple mountains, and there, seemingly at the foot of the hither hills a great white pillar of dust. They tell us that the ancient sea-roamers, faring home from the northern coast of Africa or from beyond the Pillars of Heracles, beheld from afar the spear-tip of the great statue of Athena Promachos, and knew their toils were over. The latter-day Greek, returning to his native land from New York, London, or Buenos Ayres, feels that he is indeed home again

when he sees that prehistoric cloud of floating marble. We know where to look now, and soon the Acropolis, the most famous hill in the world, and its twin, Lycabettus, practically ignored by ancient writers, take vague shape and grow more and more distinct. And there is the Parthenon, seen now for the first time, and yet so familiar in contour and position that the busy years slip from us like a dream and we imagine ourselves back in the school-room delving in the old Smith's history. I had not been three days in Athens when I met two jolly Catholic priests from Pittsburg, dining in the garden of the European restaurant.

"Have you been up on the Acropolis yet?" I asked them—the standard question that one always puts to a new-comer in the Greek capital.

"No," replied one of them. "We have decided not to go up. What's the use? It looks just as it does in the pictures." My clerical friend could not have better described the impression made on one by a first view of the Acropolis from afar. The chief element in that impression is the feeling of familiarity. No vision on all the globe has been made such common property of civilized man as the Temple of Athena, once the crowning glory of a thousand years of culture, now their fitting monument.

Half an hour before we cast anchor in the harbor of the Piræus, boats with white and reddish-brown sails come dancing toward us over the waves, and others swarm along more slowly, propelled by eager

General View of Athens and the Acropolis.

oars. Some of the rowers stand erect, facing their prows, bending and straightening with a rhythmic swing. Those first alongside catch the ship with long hooks and scramble aboard. You are surrounded in a trice by coatless, perspiring Greeks, who pluck you by either sleeve demanding, "Varka?" "Bark?" "Do you want a boat, Mr.?" There is no possible escape, and there is garlic to right of you, garlic to left of you. The only alternative is to select one of the number immediately and turn over to him your portable baggage.

There is a noisy little railroad running from the Piræus to Athens, but it is usually about as cheap to traverse the distance by carriage, as a number of Athenian cabmen are sure to be waiting on the wharf. They have brought fares down, or say they have, which amounts to the same thing, and are willing to let you ride up with them for two or three drachmas. You will remember that ride through the Attic plain. The sun is white hot, the dust penetrating, impalpable, sneeze-producing. The dark green of the vineyards is sifted with flour-like dust, and the trees by the roadside, trimmed to resemble feather dusters, seem to have been recently used and then stuck back in the ground without shaking. Once, at least, en route, the carriage stops at a wayside inn, a low adobe building whose front door is shaded by a climbing grape-vine. From a near-by well, with round stone mouth and long sweep, the host brings water to the thirsty ani-

mals, and then he appears at the carriage-door with a tray containing two or three glasses of light yellow wine, as many portions of a watery-looking fluid and a pile of Turkish delight in little cubes. You must select something and put a few pennies on the tray. It is thus you pay for the horses' water. If you are an entire stranger in the land it will be safer to choose the loukoumi (Turkish delight) and a glass of water. Loukoumi is a palatable sweet, like our gum-drops, and you will enjoy it. If, on the other hand, you are anxious to become a genuine Athenian as soon as possible, you will do well to select one of the stronger drinks. No one is a genuine Athenian who cannot drink without a grimace both retsinato wine and masticha. The former is the vin ordinaire of the city. It is wholesome and perhaps classic, but it tastes to the novice like those brands of cough medicine whose chief ingredient is tar. Masticha is the appetizer, the cocktail of Greece. The uneducated palate pronounces it paregoric.

Our most useful impressions of a place, for descriptive purposes, are gained during the first few days of our stay in it. After that the mental film loses its sensitiveness, and we are less able to discriminate between new sights and those that have been familiar to us all our lives. The person who rides into Athens for the first time on a summer's day is fairly overwhelmed with the brightness of it. It is a city of the sun, a city fairly blinding to eyes accustomed to the

dull skies of London or New York. The sky is extraordinarily clear, and as vividly transparent as the windows in a photographic studio. The square houses, of stone and stucco, are nearly all kalsomined to a dazzling whiteness. In the case of the few exceptions, the whitewash has been tinted a delicate pink, cream-color, or blue, and they are all roofed, from the King's palace down to the meanest hovel, with red tiles. White and red—the colors of fire and heat.

They have a proverb in Athens that "only fools and foreigners walk out in the middle of the day." Certainly the average American needs to live a long time in Greece or the Orient before he becomes willing to adapt himself to the requirements of the climate. If you bustle out at noon-day you will wonder why your green cotton umbrella does not protect your eyes from the glare. It is because the sidewalk is covered with glittering particles of marble, ground infinitely fine, and the street is alive with the same sort of dust. Your eyes will be apt to suffer more than the top of your head, and the only relief you can get from them is to hold the sun-shade down near the walk and look into it.

And how still it is—white light and silence! The shopkeepers have let curtains fall in their open doors and are dozing on chairs or on counters. The street-cars have stopped running and the cabmen have driven into the shade and are nodding upon their boxes. Even the bootblacks, as enterprising and as precocious

as their confrères in America at proper business hours, have made pillows and cushions of their kits, and are wrapped in sleep that a king might envy. Everybody, except the bustling foreigner, respects the noon-day nap in Athens. An Athenian would no more waken a bootblack enjoying his siesta than he would hit him with a club. The two acts would be equal in cruelty. The proper way to enjoy the siesta is to darken your room and go regularly to bed. There will not be a sound to disturb you, not the rattle of a wheel, nor the barking of a dog, nor a voice in the streets. If there is a tree near the window anywhere, you will probably hear the drowsy, monotonous rasping of a cicada. As you stir lazily upon the sheet of pure linen, always finding a cool spot, as your senses become lulled to a forgetfulness of everything save bliss and comfort, as the cares and responsibilities of life tiptoe from the room, leaving you dead to all consciousness save that of utter peace, you begin to know what Nirvana is.

The Athenians are not so lazy as they would appear to be from their habit of the noon-day rest. The old-fashioned Greek gentleman, for instance, rises very early in summer, often at four o'clock, in the glorious time of the day. He goes to market and sends home the provisions for the twelve o'clock breakfast and the late dinner, with minute directions to the cook; he takes a cigarette and a cup of black Turkish coffee on the sidewalk in front of his favorite café, and he then

devotes himself to business and politics until noon-time. After breakfast he sleeps till four, when he usually takes a sweetmeat at home or at a pastry shop and then he is ready for work again until dinner-time.

Discussing affairs.

The Athenians dine late the year round, and, whenever the weather will permit, in the open air. As the heated season advances, the dinner-hour is set later

and later, until in August half-past nine or ten becomes the common thing. Fancy going to the theatre after that! Yet the open-air performances are liberally patronized and they do not begin, of course, till after dinner. The legend, "curtain rises promptly at nine" is a snare and a delusion, as many a foreigner has found to his extreme annoyance.

The out-of-door dining and the sky-roofed theatres are so typically Greek that they serve as a link between modern and classical times. The old Greek, as everybody knows, was an out-door man, his house serving as little more than a sleeping-place and store-room. The Athenian of to-day dines in a garden, on his terrace or in a park. If he is too poor to possess any of these accessories, he sets his table upon the side-walk. Many of the cheap restaurants appropriate the walks for dining-rooms. One is often compelled, when taking an evening stroll, to dodge in and out among dozens of tables covered with reasonably clean linen and lighted by means of candles whose flames are protected from the wind by means of glass globes.

The more pretentious restaurants and some of the hotels have their own gardens, where the patrons eat under the trees, in the searching glare of electricity. How sweetly cool it is in one of these gardens, how truly Bohemian, how far removed from the stress, struggle, and nervousness of the great Anglo-Saxon idea! The food is excellent, cheap, and varied, the waiters most attentive.

I suppose that one can eat and drink as cheaply and as well in Athens as in any city of the world. The cooking is in several styles and the food is of extraordinary variety and quality. The distinctively native dishes include innumerable stuffed things, fish prepared in various ways, soup or chowder with egg and lemon, and boiled greens, eaten with olive-oil and lemon-juice. Among the Turkish dishes are the ever-present pilafi, and a choice of heavy, soggy sweetmeats whose chief ingredients are almonds, spices, and syrup. These latter go by such fearful names as galaktobouriko, cadæfi, baklava. They are indigestible and fattening, but they are not a serious menace to the ordinary traveller, who cannot call for them.

As for the city's food-supply, it draws upon the unrivalled gardens of the Attic plain, the early largess of the Mediterranean isles, and the orchards on the mountain-slopes of Thessaly. The sea feeds the city with an almost countless variety of fish, while woodcock, pigeons, quail, and partridges, are so plentiful that they cease to be a luxury. There are no muskmelons on earth like those raised by the King of Greece at Tatoï, and the Turkish pashas used to come to Athens each season to eat the basilika figs. You can dine at Athens at prices varying from a drachma up. The drachma is a depreciated paper franc, of fluctuating value—usually worth about twelve cents.

But we must not forget to visit the market, which is one of the most picturesque and interesting places in

MARBLE WORKERS AT THE STADION.

In front of the Stadium. The Acropolis in distance—also Stadion Bridge.

modern Athens. I fancy that when I spoke of the Greek gentleman as going to market at four o'clock in the morning and sending home his dinner, I called up a picture of butchers' and green-grocers' wagons arriving at the house two or three hours later. Nothing could be farther from the truth. The army of boot-blacks and news-boys in Athens is supplemented by still another guild of bright, industrious little chaps—the market-boys. These hang about the entrances to the spacious, glass-roofed structure where the stalls are housed, or they lay in wait along the streets leading to it. Each carries a basket, supplied with straps for passing under the shoulders, by which it is supported on the back. The moment you show the least indication of turning in toward the market, these sturdy, good-natured, ragged, impudent little fellows fall upon you like pirates and will not be denied. You must select one as soon as possible, if you do not wish to be the centre and cause of a veritable riot. He will follow you about for an hour or so and you can drop your purchases into his basket, sure that he will find your house, and will deliver your minute directions without error. For this service a Greek pays him two cents, and a foreigner four—for no one is quicker to learn the prehistoric distinction between Greek and barbarian than your market-boy. The interior of the building is devoted to the green-groceries and game upon the one side and the fish upon the other. Before the vegetable stalls hang long strings of quail, partridges, wild

ducks, plover, woodcock, hedgehogs, chickens, and turkeys, the latter with their crops pompously inflated to give them an extra-fat appearance. Not infrequently wild boar from Thessaly, deer, and splendid golden pheasants are added to the array. In the centre, upon tables and upon floor, are to be found heaps of wild greens in season, for boiling, and of sea-foods, strange to the ordinary Anglo-Saxon—pinnas, devil-fish, clams shaped like Brazil-nuts, and heaps of whitebait from Phaleron, leaping like bits of animated silver in piles of green sea-weed. The display of fish includes all the varieties of the Mediterranean—always fresh, generally alive. Specially detailed officers are on hand to condemn stale exhibits, which are promptly thrown on the floor of the market and carted away. As far as I could see, there is no politics connected with the tenure of these officers, nor are they open to corruption. Certain it is that they perform their duties relentlessly and without fear or favor. Schedules posted in conspicuous places by the chief of police, list the legal prices of leading articles and prevent extortion.

The fruit-stores and the meat-booths are mainly on the exterior of the main building, surrounding its four sides. As much of the butchering is done on the spot, it is not pleasant to visit this part of the market when lambs, for instance, are being killed. The sight is sufficient to cause a tender-hearted person to turn vegetarian—a veritable slaughter of the innocents.

Lamb and its cousin goat are the favorite meat in

Athens, where the situation is well expressed in the famous line of Byron, "For beef is scarce within these oxless isles." I have often seen a tiny market-boy with his basket loaded to the brim, and the carcass of a lamb bent about his neck.

But I have said so much about early rising, sleeping in the heat of the day and dining late at night, that the reader no doubt wonders why Athens should be considered a summer-resort by the real Greeks. He would not wonder had he ever passed the heated season in Alexandria or Cairo. As for the northern Greeks, they no doubt come to the metropolis of their race for the sake of the companionship. Besides, as a learned professor once said to me, there are the "elements of coolness in the Athens climate." In the professor's case, the "elements" consisted of a shade-tree and a refreshing drink. The difference in the matter of comfort between sun and shade is very striking. One always feels a pleasing chill in stepping from the former into the latter. The very heat, too, is made an agent of producing its opposite. Most of the drinking-water consumed by the Athenians is cooled by means of evaporation, which, in that dry climate, takes place very rapidly. The porous jugs of brown earthenware which you find upon the restaurant tables or upon the balcony of your sleeping-room, are sure to be full of deliciously cool water. It suffices only that they be set in the shade. Skill in the selection of these jugs is one of the little details which enter into Oriental life

and make it truly typical. They are tested by tapping with the knuckles and by critical examinations as to color, degree of hardness, etc. If they are too porous they leak, if not porous enough they do not perspire. It is easy to see that the selection of a good cooling jug is a matter of great importance in a family.

A Water-seller on the Street.

Perhaps the study of points analogous with this would give us a clearer idea of the every-day life and thought of ancient civilization. Certain it is that the sale of pottery is one of the very oldest of callings, and that the pottery merchant tied his vessel to the wharves even of Homeric towns, and spread out his wares upon

the breakwater—even as he does to-day. I believe that the best cooling jugs now come from the island of Ægina (pronounced—nearly—Egg-ina and accented upon the first syllable).

The water-supply of Athens should be fairly good, but as the conduits are open and the reservoir not very carefully guarded, it is subject to contamination. There is, therefore, a brisk sale for the water brought in barrels and large "stamnas" or jugs, from Kaisariane and Marousi. The barrels are placed at convenient street-corners and are cooled also by evaporation. They are wrapped in thick blankets of straw matting, which is frequently soaked by the vender. The contents retail at five lepta, or a cent, for one or two glasses, as the purchaser may desire. These barrels are a great institution, for the Greek is essentially a water-drinker. He takes an occasional glass of wine or masticha, it is true, but water is the beverage which he really relishes. The vice of drunkenness is reduced to a minimum. It is not sufficiently rife to be worth preaching against. The water-barrels are filled mainly at Kaisariane, a deserted monastery a few miles out of the city, on the slope of Mount Hymettus. Spiridon Loues, the young shepherd who won the foot-race from Marathon, at the Olympian Games in 1896, is the chief distributer of the Marousi water. This idyllic little town lies off toward Pentelicon, on the road to Kephissia and Tatoï, the King's summer residence. If you start for Marousi on a bicycle or

on foot a little before sunrise on a summer's morning, you are sure to meet Loues and two or three of his men jogging city-ward through the violet-gray dawn, with mule-carts laden with huge red jars of porous earth, for the Athenian kitchens. The privilege of selling this water was given to Loues as a reward for his victory in the great foot-race. His fellow-townsmen regard him as a modern Pheidippides, and they have shown their appreciation of the honor which he has brought to Marousi.

Spiro Loues, Winner of the Marathon Road Race in the Olympian Games, 1896.

But all this is apropos of the statement that there are "elements of coolness" in the Athenian climate. In the afternoon, as soon as the sun has sunk behind the houses and distant mountains, and the long shadows begin to creep across the town, the leisure classes stroll into Constitution Square, or on to the little plateau of the Zappeion, to show their fine feathers, to listen to the music of the military bands, and to converse. At these hours there is a liberal con-

sumption of Turkish sweets and of French and Italian ices.

The greatest hospitality prevails, but reciprocal and endless treating is practically unknown. If you sit down at a table pre-empted by an acquaintance, you are his guest, and it is contrary to etiquette to offer him anything.

There are no fustanellas at these public gatherings, nor does one see the picturesque head-dress and jacket worn of old time by the women. Fashionable Greeks get their idea of dress from Paris. The women patronize French modistes largely or bring their gowns from the French capital. They dress gayly, for the most part, as do most southern races, affecting such bright colors as red and yellow. In summer the numerous officers wear white from head to foot, relieved only by the gold tassels of their sword-handle, or the bits of color in their chevrons.

A Major of the Greek Army.

There are two principal squares in Athens, at either end of Stadion Street. Omonia or Concord Square is much loved by the common folk, the Place of the Constitution being the fashionable rendezvous

The King's palace, a clumsy, ugly, barracks-like

structure, belonging to the heirs of King Otho, looks down upon Constitution Square from a slight eminence, and the leading hotels of the town surround it upon the other three sides. The building for several years occupied by the Crown Prince Constantine, as a residence, and as the chief bureau of the Olympian Games is also here. It has been recently converted into a brasserie, for Constantine has at last moved into his beautiful new house, back of the King's gardens—a more suitable home for his consort, the sister of William of Germany.

The view from the Zappeion, the building in which the permanent industrial exposition of Greece is housed, is the most entrancing in Athens. Sitting there at sun-down sipping his black coffee, the modern Greek beholds enough of present beauty and departed glory to make him both very proud and very sad. Immediately before him is a garden of palms and flowers overlooked by marble statues of the two brothers who built the Zappeion and after whom it is named. A broad flight of marble steps leads down to a lower level, where are the remains of a Roman gymnasium and a fair specimen of mosaic flooring. Farther away are the imposing pillars of the great Temple of Zeus, not reverenced by scholars as an expression of the genuine Greek spirit, yet none the less the majestic ruins of the house of a dead god. Like tall chieftains, the columns are gathered there in lyonesse, making their last stand against the onswarming years. One

At the Zappeion. 5 P.M.

that has fallen recently, lies as straight as though it had received its death-wound and lain calmly down to die. These columns are fifty-five feet in height (about) and six and a half in diameter, and at their base enterprising Greeks have set out puny tables whereon coffee is served and the inevitable loukoumi. One is tempted to compare these puny merchants with the men who built the Olympiion and to comment in this connection on the degeneracy of the modern Greeks. But this is not fair. In the time of Peisistratus, who founded the temple, and in the days of Hadrian, who finished it, there were doubtless individuals whose minds would have fitted very nicely into a coffee-cup. Men of dwindled souls have existed in all ages of the world. The modern Athenians do not build temples to Zeus, but they are trying to found schools and an untrammelled press, and they are giving more money, *per capita*, than any people in the world to public libraries, hospitals, reformatory institutions, etc. Very recently the munificence of George Aberoff, the new Herodes Atticus, caused the sound of hammer and chisel to be heard again in the Stadium after a lapse of nearly twenty centuries. This act of liberality attracted the attention of the civilized world, yet it was but one example of a long series of bequests and donations on the part of wealthy Greeks to the city of Athens, and to Greece in general.

If, as we sit there in the shadow of the Zappeion, we raise our eyes a little, looking through and beyond

A Sunset.

the columns of the Olympiion, we behold the sea gleaming beyond the Attic plain and, farther away, Ægina floating in a purple haze. The abrupt wall of the Acropolis rises at our right, some distance away, and the slopes of Hymettus are within view at our left. It will pay us to keep our eyes fixed upon the slopes of Hymettus just as the sun is going down. During the few moments immediately following the disappearance of that luminary the sides of the mountain are bathed in a deep, soft, yet quite vivid violet hue. This is the most transporting, most poetic spectacle on earth—the far-famed transfiguration of Hymettus. The mountain is wrapped in the atmosphere of happy dreams; it appears unreal because it has become too beautiful for this latter-day world. It was a fitting apparition, perhaps, in that golden age when the love of beauty was man's religion, but it looks lonely and strange now. No painter can paint it, no words can tell it. The man who has once lived within sight of Hymettus cherishes to his dying day the intention to return and live there again. The poet or the dreamer who has looked but once upon that violet glow is homesick for it ever after. It is the light of the soul's desire, the light of utter loveliness, of lost years, of unforgotten loves and songs unsung.

It is a glorious sight, too, to see the full moon rise from behind Hymettus, large as a votive shield. The mountain's familiar outline is sketched sharply against the sky as with one long sweep of a god's pencil and

the white houses of the beautiful city creep into the pale glow, street after street. It is no wonder the old Greeks worshipped the moon, for she is most glorious in Greece. Her splendor does not seem borrowed there, but has sway and character. And when that great orb is floating serenely above Hymettus, kissing tenderly the shafts of ancient temples, piercing the darkness between the pillars of the Parthenon, and rubbing the breath of night from the silvery mirror of the sea, one knows that he is indeed in Athens, the only eternal city. Even the driest professional archæologist feels the presence of mighty ghosts when he walks by full moonlight among the ruins of the Acropolis.

II

THE sojourner in summer Athens who understands the modern vernacular fairly well, will derive extraordinary pleasure from visiting the open-air theatres, for the Athenian of to-day, like the Greeks of twenty centuries ago, considers the sky a sufficient roof for his play-house. But the analogy does not extend much farther. The old Greek went to the theatre in the daytime, sat patiently for hours upon a bank of earth, a wooden slab, or, later, upon a marble seat. He listened to the plays of Phrynichus and Æschylus, of Aristophanes and Mænander, in the broiling sun, with the actual sea, the olive-groves and the distant islands for scenery and drop-curtain. The modern Athenian, as we have seen, goes to the theatre very late at night. He takes his place in an enclosure, roofed over by the sky, it is true, but furnished with modern footlights and painted scenery. The long dry season renders the open-air theatre quite practicable, and it is much more comfortable to sit at night under the cool sky than in a hot room. The worst menace to enjoyment is the immemorial flea, but the natives have become accustomed to him. They even bring numerous little dogs to the theatre with them, and

these animals are running around continually among the legs of the spectators, dropping off whole colonies of fleas—and your flea is a most enthusiastic expansionist. But this matter of insects is purely a question of acclimatization. After one has lived for some time in a tropic land he is lonely without them.

On one occasion, at least, I have seen the Greek prove true to his traditions. The ancient audience, when listening to a long contest between two or more of its great dramatists, must have been forgetful of heat and of cold. I doubt if a shower would have driven it away just before the tremendous climax in the "Agamemnon." Once it began to rain while I was attending an interpretation by Paraskevopoulou of the "Medea," done into modern Greek from a French play founded upon the ancient legend. It continued to rain, and not a soul moved. It poured, and not a seat was deserted. Finally the actress advanced to the footlights and asked, familiarly, in the vulgarest vernacular possible: *Βρέχει' διὰ τὶ δὲν κόβετε λάσπι;* "It's raining; why don't you take French leave?" And a great shout went up: "Go on, go on, never mind the rain." The delicacy and force of this tribute are the better understood when one reflects that the stage in such theatres is covered. The performance was finished despite the rain.

Evangelia Paraskevopoulou is known in Greece as the "Athenian Sara Bernhardt." She is a remarkable example of the power of genius to lift one up out

of the slough of poverty and ignorance. Her origin was very humble, and she has never had the advantages of an education, yet she plays to crowded houses wherever enough Greeks can be got together to make up an audience—in Athens or in other parts of Greece, in Egypt or Roumania. The only other Athenian tragic actress who has dared to dispute supremacy with her is Aikaterina Verone. Strangely enough neither of these women is beautiful. There has been considerable talk among wealthy Greeks of bringing Paraskevopoulou to America, and of starring her with an English-speaking company. She would speak Greek, as the elder Salvini did Italian, the remainder of the company using English. She would be able to give a good account of herself.

A great comic actor who is seen every year in Athens is E. Pantopoulos. It would be hard to find a living Greek who has not heard of him, or a public idol anywhere whose fame is more thoroughly scattered among his own countrymen. Pantopoulos studies principally the costumes, character, and dialects of the queer old island farmers, whom he reproduces upon the mimic stage with absolute fidelity. He does not "act." Art is forgotten in his case, for it is swallowed up in nature. He actually becomes for the time being the character written down in the play. There is not a false tone, accent, or gesture, and his audience, many of whom are of rustic origin or who have at least lived in the country, enjoy to the utmost his excruciating mimicry.

Nor must I forget in this connection to pay tribute to the abilities of N. Pezodromos, Paraskevopoulou's

The Theseion from the Gardens.

leading man, and to the sturdy merit of Kyrios Leskatsas, who draws good houses to Hamlet and Iago, produced in excellent translation. It may not be uninteresting to note that modern Greek is a very suitable dress for Shakespearian thought, and, when rightly handled, meets all the emergencies of translation. It is probable that the modern Greeks have a better idea of our master poet than any other foreign nation.

They quote him with surprising frequency, and they roll off from memory such pompous periods as "*Μεγάλοι, παντοδύναμοι καὶ σεβαστοὶ αὐθένται*" (Most potent, grave, and reverend seigniors), in a manner which leaves no doubt that they have got a glimpse of the real "Bard of Avon."

But the chief attractions at the summer theatres are the genuinely Greek plays, and four or five of these seem to have taken a permanent hold upon public favor. The Athenians never tire of going to see "Maroula's Luck," "The Victory of Leonidas," "Captain Yakomes," "The Shepherdess's Lover," "A Little of Everything."

Several of these comedies possess considerable literary merit, and are worthy of being translated into English. "Maroula's Luck," the most famous of them all, is the work of Demetrius Koromelas. The characters are all servants in a great house, and Maroula, the laundress, is the heroine. She is in love with the dashing coachman and does not reciprocate the affections of the more worthy, but less showy, cook. Maroula's father, a quaint old farmer, appears on the scene bringing to Athens one of those antique gems which are sometimes picked up in the Greek vineyards. The coachman, thinking the stone of value, becomes attentive to Maroula, but jilts her when an unscrupulous lapidary pronounces it worthless. Finally it is discovered that the gem is worth a small fortune, and the coachman renews his suit, but is

rejected by the pretty laundress, whose heart has at last yielded to the cook's patient devotion. The dialogue is bright and natural, and many musical lyrics are scattered through it.

The "Shepherdess's Lover" is an idyllic drama of considerable beauty. A wealthy shepherd has remained single because of an early disappointment in love. After many years he meets the object of his youthful affections and does not recognize her. She persuades her daughter to become his fiancée and he consents, because the girl reminds him of the mother as he remembers her. But he confesses one day that his heart is still true to its early idol. He recognizes the mother at last from her voice, singing a song of their childhood, and all comes right. The rich suitor marries the mother and helps the daughter to wed the young shepherd, for whom she had in reality been pining. The scene is laid in a mountain village and the details are essentially Greek, such as the dance of the shepherds, the roasting of the lambs, the preparation of the marriage-wreaths. The daughter, moreover, accepts the husband selected by her mother with a docility which would not be convincing to an American audience.

Admission to the theatres ranges from fifty lepta to two drachmas (seven and a half to thirty cents). The principal playhouses are the National Theatre, a fine building recently completed, in which only original Greek works will be produced; the Theatre Syngros,

the Polytheama, the Omonia, the Tsocha and the Athenaion. The first three named are "winter theatres," and the new National at least is a building of which the city may well be proud. It is under the patronage of the government, and it is said that the King contributed liberally toward its erection.

But not everybody in Athens is able to pay even so small a sum as fifty lepta for entertainment, and there are numerous small theatres where the admission is cheaper. There are also the travelling companies, usually consisting of singing or dancing families, who perform from cheap booths, frequently erected by themselves, and who pass the hat or tambourine between the acts.

The pantomime is in high favor with Hoi polloi, a successful piece sometimes running for several consecutive weeks. Thus the humorous and complicated adventures of "The Two Sergeants" never fail to draw a paying house, and, since the war with Turkey, "The Battle of Velestino" has been in steady demand. This is a very noisy, patriotic spectacle, whose chief character is an actor made up to represent General Smolenski, the hero of the one battle in which the Greeks really scored. During the performance mimic shells burst upon the stage with a tremendous uproar, and the harmless pieces, flying among the audience, cause the wildest excitement. This pantomime, like all others, is acted to monotonous, drawling music. As originally produced, the Greek flag was unfurled

in the finale and the national hymn was played, whereupon the entire audience rose and saluted; but this last feature was discontinued through official edict as an undignified use of the hymn and the flag.

This brief account of the Athenian stage would be quite incomplete without mention of the marionettes and the shadow-plays. In the case of the last named, moving silhouettes, thrown upon a screen, take the place of actors, and the lines are spoken by a hidden ventriloquist.

Our old friends Punch and Judy need no description. They appear in Athens under the aliases of Phasolé and Perikles—both words accented on the ultimate. Suffice to say that the Evil One is held in wholesome respect in Athens and the lèse majesté of bringing him before the footlights is never attempted. His lines are spoken by a Turk—devil enough for any Greek audience.

So at the regular theatre of marionettes, which is enclosed, and dignified by an admission fee (usually one cent), the villain is always a Turk. Comedy figures but little in the repertoire of the marionettes. They dance, topple, and jerk about in the stormy passions of princes, warriors, and great ladies, and squeak or growl interminable speeches in stilted Greek. And what an appreciative audience that is! When the Christian maiden is carried off by the naughty Turk, all the servant-girls present — Aspasia, Paraskevé, Maria, Anthoula—groan and sob, and the bootblacks

and market-boys hurl curses at the Turk with open palms. When the villain at last meets his just deserts

The Resort of the Lowly—Marionettes.

—and you may be sure that he is tremendously lambasted at the end—the joy of the audience is tumultuous.

The walls of Athens are liberally papered with theatrical announcements, and the foreigner who can read the language at all is agreeably surprised to see the names of plays that have long been stand-byes on the English stage, transliterated in giant characters side by

side with those of our latest successes—"The Two Orphans" hobnobbing with "Charley's Aunt" or "Mr. Wilkinson's Widows."

If I were asked to name the most typical amusements of the modern Athenian, I should say that it is connected with that love of nature which is, after all, his birthmark. In the outskirts of the city are numerous gardens, where the people gather and sit till late at night, eating and drinking, singing and talking. Fêtes of various outlying churches and monasteries occur also with bewildering frequency and give rise to many an all-night celebration, when lambs are roasted whole and the modern Pyrrhic is danced by stout palikaria (strong young men, braves).

Nor is that sweet goddess Flora forgotten in these Christian times. On the afternoon before May 1st the city's population scatters into the fields to gather wild flowers, which they make into wreaths. Returning home before sunrise, they hang a garland over each door, and there it remains, if no accident occurs, until May comes round again. Those who have not gone into the country to make their own wreaths buy them of the boys who carry them about the town threaded upon poles.

III

THE Athenian who keeps house anywhere except on the widest and most fashionable streets is obliged to rise very early in summer, willy nilly. The fruit and vegetable pedlers are abroad while the morning star is still in the heavens, and they wake every sleeping thing save those who are waiting the trump of doom. Down the narrow streets they go in endless procession, yelling with brazen lungs a chorus of barbarous words, Greek, Turkish, Italian. In no other city of the world are the street-cries so varied, so harrowing, so vocally picturesque, so interesting. Some of them have flitted about the town from classic days, as deathless and as Greek as the owls of the Parthenon. Boys still sell little bundles of fat pine, in great demand as kindling wood, crying "Dhadhé!" (*Δαδί!*) * in at the open doors and windows.

The earliest of all the street-men is the vender of "salépi," which he cries with a sharp hammer-tap of the voice on the short "e." He struggles along through the half-light, carrying a huge samovar of brass, studded with hooks on which a dozen or more metal cups jingle and rattle. Salépi is a hot herb drink, of a

* "*Δαδίον*," Aristophanes, "Equites," 921.

mild, agreeable flavor, and is often taken in place of coffee. The salépi-seller comes just before dawn and steals away at sunrise, and is one of those distinctive features of a foreign city which the ordinary traveller never sees.

Nor do the men who sell milk and its various products lie in bed till the sun rises. There are a couple of European dairies in Athens, whose proprietors keep cows; but they do business mostly with the foreigners and with those Greeks who ape foreign manners. Your genuine Athenian believes the goat to be the proper milk-producing animal, and he regards the cow in this connection about as we Americans do the mare. The milkman takes his animals with him, jangling their bells and sneezing. "Gála!" he shouts, a quick, startling cry, with a "g" whose guttural quality is unattainable by adult learners and usually unperceived by them. When a customer comes to the door he strips the desired quantity into the proffered receptacle before her vigilant eyes, selecting one of the goats, and paying no attention to the others, who understand the business as well as he does. Patiently they stand about, chewing the cud or resting on contiguous door-steps. When their master moves on, they arise and follow, more faithful than dogs. The obvious and well-nigh overpowering temptation to which the milkman is subjected, affects him in Greece as in America. In Greece it is taken for granted that he cannot resist, and he is therefore obliged to take his animals with

a goat herd
Corwin K Linson

him. But even thus he is not above suspicion, for they tell of a rubber water-bag, carried inside the coat and provided with a tube reaching to the palm of the hand. Each time the milkman closes his hand over the udder he presses the bag between his arm and his body.

Gála is good Greek, and so is its genitive galaktos, but we cannot say as much for "giaourti," another of the most familiar street-cries of Athens—a barbaric sound resembling a howl, suddenly interrupted by a blow in the pit of the stomach. "Yo'wr-te," they pronounce it, sharp as the bark of a dog. The thing itself is curdled goat's milk in bowls that are carried in a tin box, cut up into pigeon-holes. Curiously enough giaourti, when eaten with powdered sugar, is good.

"Voútyro! Voútyro!" That's the man selling white, unsalted butter from a stone crock, for the morning rolls. If you learn to like it once, salted butter tastes musty ever after.

These three varieties of merchant, who depend upon the goat for a livelihood, are for the most part stalwart shepherds in tight-fitting leggings and blouses with skirts reaching half way to the knees. They often wear tsarouchia, and colored handkerchiefs tied about their heads, knotted at the back. Their barbaric, explosive shouts—"Gála!" "Yowrte!" "Voútyro!"—seem especially designed to awaken the sleeping city. They are followed by a melancholy cry, long drawn out: "Koulouria!" (koo-loo-rei-ah). The koulou-

ria man is a musical, mournful fellow, and if you listen, his voice will grow fainter and fainter in the distance, with such perfect diminuendo that you fancy you hear it even when that is no longer possible. The koulouri is a species of hot roll, usually sold from a flat board which the vender carries on top of his head.

While on the subject of mournful cries, I must not forget the man who sells "pantoúfeles," dwelling for a long time on the "ou." The French scholar will recognize the word, pantoúfles (slippers). They are carried through the streets slung two and two on a long stick, and are sold largely to servant girls who make their employers pay for them. Pantoúfles, about one pair a month, are a perquisite of service in Athens, according to unwritten law.

Then there are insinuating cries, uttered in an inquiring tone, that depend for their penetrating quality on a long "e," that favorite sound in modern Greek. Such are (phonetically spelled) seeka, stapheelia, radheekia, peenes (figs, grapes, wild greens, pinnas).

The wild greens are sold from bags by very old,

bent, and witch-like women, who become so associated with that one senile plaint, uttered in a cracked voice, that one no longer regards them as thinking and talking women. They have ceased to be old gossips, they are birds of some ancient mythologic sort and that is their cry—" Radheekia ! Radheekia ! "

The pinnas are enormous clams with a narrowish, flat shell. They are as wide as a man's hand, or wider, and a foot or more in length. They are carried in a flat basket, with the hinge ends in the centre, like the spokes of a wheel. Save for about a teacup of clam at the hinge end, the shells are entirely empty. If you buy a half dozen the merchant chips a little hole in the shell of one and then empties the contents of the other five into the receptacle thus made.

The garlic vender carries his fragrant wares in long ropes, thrown over his shoulders. The Greek word for garlic is σκόρδος—a good old word and a good old plant, highly relished in Greece and believed to possess many mysterious, health-giving properties. It is also a sovereign prophylactic against the evil eye. The baby or the pet goat is quite safe against this evil, who wears a kernel of garlic in a little bag tied around the neck. Garlic is eaten raw by the peasantry and laboring classes with their bread, and for this reason the Europeanized Athenians—the society people—pretend to abhor it. But this is only an affectation. They periodically retire to the country and have garlic debauches, and at such times the young ladies are not to be seen.

At the "Asty" Restaurant—a Typical Outdoor Restaurant Scene in Athens at Night.

No genuine Athenian can live three months without garlic. And why should he? 'Tis a classic plant, most respectable in its antiquity, and not to be disowned by people whose chief pride is their ancient lineage.

One of the most typical sounds in any eastern city —and Athens is at least semi-Oriental—is the creak! creak! of the huge panniers which the patient little donkeys carry, one on each side. All that is visible of the approaching animal is the head, twisted around sideways and tied down to keep him from taking toll. The two great baskets, side by side and laden with fruit or vegetables, seem to move of their own accord, so disproportionate are they to the size of the blue-gray, moth-eaten little beast beneath them. The men who drive these donkeys about the streets furnish good material for those who argue that modern Greek is merely a hodge-podge of various languages. Listen to the sing-song inventory of goods on sale:

Tomáhtes, potáthes, koloky-tháh-kia, viséhlia, phasólia, angou-ráh-kia!

The modern Greek enthusiast, on the other hand, can reply that we have here three words of Greek derivation, applied to articles botanically akin to those eaten to-day—kolokinthia, phasólia, angouria (vegetable marrow, beans, cucumbers). As for tomatoes and potatoes, it is perfectly legitimate to apply new names to them, as they are new things. By this sensible process such philological monstrosities are avoided as pomme de terre and pome d'oro.

The turkey merchant is the most wonderful of street venders. He arrives with two or three hundred birds, which he drives about town for a week or two, selling them one by one. He is armed with a long pole, with which he touches up lazy or quarrelsome birds. They gobble continuously, and he shouts above the din: "Gállous, Gallópoula, Gallopoúles" (Turkey cocks, little turkeys, little hen turkeys)! When one drove meets another face to face, or at right angles, they pass through without confusion, and no bird changes masters.

These are only a few of the street-cries of Athens which, mingled with the barking of dogs, the braying of donkeys, and the shouts of children, relieve the loneliness of the poorer quarters during the busy hours of the day. I cannot mention them all, but there is one other which I must not forget, "Meli! Meli" (Honey, honey)! The vender is a shepherd from the slopes of Mount Hymettus, from the pages of the old poets. He carries a branch in his hand, to which is attached, by its base, a great triangle of honey made from flowers of the wild thyme. He does not get far nor shout many times.

But do not despair of obtaining all the Hymettus honey you want, even if you do not happen to see this shepherd. The thing is easy enough for the housekeeper who knows how to go about it. Tawny swarms of bees drift down the slopes of Hymettus in the early morning, and home again at night, and all day long

they buzz among the purple blossoms of the wild thyme. Rustics lure them into antique conical hives, and betray their confidence by robbing them, selling the product without difficulty to Athenian families. Who tastes the genuine Hymettus honey will find no cause of disillusionment, Professor Mahaffy to the contrary notwithstanding ("Rambles in Greece," page 156). The genial professor seems to have formed his unfavorable impression from the honey furnished him at some hotel table, which may not have been a fair sample.

Housekeeping in Athens is easy and agreeable, if one has enough of the language to get along with native servants—the French-speaking variety that has been spoiled at the legations is generally to be avoided. By the way, you can commence with a vocabulary of half a dozen words, and how fast one does pick up a language from servants! Unfurnished houses cost all the way from sixty to four hundred drachmas per month—about $9 to $60—according to location. A passable house on a good street can be got for one hundred drachmas. They are built with large rooms and high ceilings. Servants are cheap and good, and one keeps more of them in Greece than in America. A gentleman with a small income, say $2,000 a year, maintains quite an establishment there. A cook suitable for a legation and competent to plan and prepare a respectable course dinner, receives one hundred drachmas per month. With moderately good

Typical Greek House.

luck one can obtain a cook that will answer all ordinary purposes for forty drachmas. Chambermaids ask from

twenty-five to forty drachmas, and the indispensable *παιδί*, or boy, about ten or fifteen. The boy is to go to market when you wish, and to run errands, as no self-respecting Greek woman, servant, or lady, likes to be seen in the street unattended. Charcoal for cooking purposes costs about six drachmas the bag, and is weighed out to you on old-fashioned steelyards, one hook of which is made to clutch a pole passed from

shoulder to shoulder of the merchant and his assistant. You must watch the charcoal dealer very closely to see that there is not a string or ravelling hanging from the bottom of the bag on which he may put his foot while the weighing is being done. If one of your own servants suddenly becomes excited and begins to talk very fast, using the words "klephtes," "maskeras," and the Greek word for "father" frequently, you may safely surmise that cheating has been going on and that your faithful retainer has been consigning the soul of the merchant's father to an orthodox place of torment.

You will need a few olive knots, too, for your fireplaces. A hundred drachmas' worth will be sufficient for quite a large house.

The most delightful feature of housekeeping in Athens is that servants pay you a hundred little attentions that are not "nominated in the bond." They unbutton your shoes at night and bring your slippers, they black your shoes, and they have your bed open for you in the evening, and your night-robe or pajamas invitingly spread out, ready for occupancy. At any moment you are apt to find some thoughtful little thing done for your comfort. If you treat them kindly they become attached to you and their grief is quite painful when you are finally obliged to leave the country.

IV

THE street pedler and his donkey are not seen in their greatest glory on the principal thoroughfares, the streets known as Hermes, Kephissia, University, Academy, Stadion. These all debouch into Constitution Square, like rivers into a lake. Hermes Street is where the ladies do their shopping; Kephissia is lined with modern residences, and is a fashionable drive; University and Academy streets are named after the beautiful buildings which adorn them, and the Hodos Stadiou connects the Square of the Constitution with Concord Square, between which plies a line of noisy *vis-à-vis*, or four-seated wagons, drawn by equine skeletons. These latter are driven furiously to and fro with much hissing and cracking of long whip-lashes and more bilingual profanity. The poor animals are kept in motion continually, whether business be dull or brisk, for, like bicycles, they have a tendency to fall down when quiescent. There were never any horses in the world so lean as they, except those of the old Fifth Avenue stage line in New York.

One has but to strike off at right angles from any of the principal arteries at almost any point to get into a genuine "native quarter," to get among the homes

Houses on the Side of the Acropolis.

of Greeks who dwell in Athens winter and summer, who earn their living in the various industries of the city, and whose men folks take their recreation at the little cafés which are as thick as saloons in an American city. There is nothing in Athens which corresponds exactly to our tenements. Labor and materials are cheap, and a family of very moderate means can own its own house, invariably a two-story building of stone and stucco, surrounded by an adobe wall. Within the court thus formed there is sure to be a tree or two, and a few flowers. The northern slopes of the Acropolis, the regions about the so-called Theseion, the Areopagus and the Temple of the Olympian Zeus, the lower approach to Lycabettus, and the road to Phaleron are crowded thick with these dwellings.

The old city extended, as indicated by the traces of the ancient wall, on the south to a little way beyond the theatre of Dionysus; on the east, to the Arch of Hadrian, including, in Roman times, the Zappeion district; and on the north, about to Stadion Street and the Dipylon, taking in Pnyx Hill. It thus appears that the modern town has greatly outgrown, in respect of area, its glorious forerunner, though we must take into account that there were many suburbs in old times outside the walls.

The place of the tenement is taken in the modern capital of Greece by the avlé, or court, and the houses built around three sides of it. This court is usually shaded by a large tree or two, and in its floor of

beaten earth is scooped out a little basin, kept full of water from the bryse, or common hydrant. Here the ducks of the various families make friends and disport together, and the numerous dogs and chickens satisfy

Street Leading Down from the Acropolis.

their thirst. Each family occupies on an average two rooms, from which, it is needless to say, children of all ages overflow until the court resembles the playground of a public school.

The café, like the saloon in Anglo-Saxon and Celtic cities, is the club of the poor. It consists of a hospitable room for winter and a shaded bit of sidewalk or a little court for summer. Here the men of the neighborhood gather to play dominoes, to talk politics or business or to arrange marriages. Black coffee, at from five to twenty lepta the cup (one to four cents), is the universal beverage, and the cigarette and the narghile are the only modes of smoking. The narghile is most affected by the old-time Athenians, those who cling to the fast-disappearing fustanella or bracha, or who still wear it in their hearts. The latter is the island costume, breeches of strong homespun whose voluminous seat hangs like a bag between the knees and reaches nearly to the ground. To be the genuine thing, it should be of cloth whose thread was twisted by patient fingers from a tuft of snowy wool nesting in the crotch of an old-fashioned distaff. (When we use the word "old-fashioned" in this connection, we are thinking of fashions coeval with the Pyramids and Mycenæ.) Throughout the country regions and islands of Greece all the cloth that is used in the household is made by hand from the wool; and upon the back streets of Athens estimable peasant women may be seen standing in the doorways twirling spinning-whorls similar to those used by the handmaidens of Helen of Troy.

Hand-looms are still in use in the Greek capital, as they are in the villages, and the silk-spinner, with

his portable wheel, is a common sight in shaded alleys —a reminder of the times when the great ladies of Venice arrayed themselves sumptuously in Greek silk

Smoking a Narghile.

and when it was made into trousers for the indolent beauties of a thousand Turkish harems.

After the café, the foúrno (oven) is the institution

which plays the largest part in the lives of an Athenian neighborhood. Very little baking is done in Greek kitchens, a wise arrangement due to the warm climate.

The stove is merely a cube of masonry, breast high, with holes on the upper surface in which charcoal is burned for broiling steaks and boiling pots. A flue, opening on the face of the cube, furnishes a draught, and

the children of the household are called into frequent requisition to fan this flue with a turkey's wing when the pot refuses to boil. To the foúrno are carried all roasts, and children or servants are continually running to and fro with copper pans containing a leg of lamb

An Athens Kitchen.

garnished with potatoes, a grinning goat's head reposing in a bed of tomatoes, tomatoes themselves, stuffed with minced goat's meat, or a large fish twisted into a semicircle and seasoned with onions and parsley. The various sweetmeats already mentioned are also baked at the foúrno, which consists of a great cave wherein a

fire is built. When the cave is sufficiently hot the fire is pushed back and the bread and waiting dishes are put in. No other impression of childhood lingers so vividly in the mind of the expatriated Greek as that of the neighborhood oven. When the doors are thrown open at night, disclosing that great cavern of fire, a dozen silent, dark-eyed children are sure to be looking in through the low stone archway of the shop, and the kindly baker, with his long-handled rake pulling out the fragrant loaves or turning the stone or copper platters, makes a picture very like that which they have been taught concerning the Evil One. The loaves, of coarse, wholesome bread, are piled on a platform by the wide window and, when you choose one, the baker jumps up among them with his bare feet and throws it to you.

For the Baker's Oven.

The fragrance which wafts from his place is due to the wild thyme which he burns in his oven, brought to him on donkeys from the slopes of Hymettus and the other contiguous hills. The bread is made of meslin, in round loaves, each weighing an oke (two pounds and five-

eighths) and selling for sixty lepta (about eight cents). The price is fixed by law, and the least disposition on the part of the bakers to raise prices or to give under-weight arouses an instant storm of popular indignation—as happened when a youthful Chicago operator attempted not long ago "to corner" the wheat market of the world.

A Greek Papas.

Among the rank and file of Greeks, about the only ones who ever taste white bread are the priests and their families, who eat the fine loaves brought to the churches for communion purposes. This one fact is typical of the social standing of the Papas or priest, who is a man of immense influence and honor among the Greeks who have not been corrupted by the fashionable scepticism of the age. His hand is kissed by his parishioners, his opinion on all matters is received with the greatest defer-

ence, he is the central figure in the most vital ceremonies of the community—birth, marriage, death.

"In his stately flowing robe."

62

The two classes that add most to the picturesque effect of the streets and cafés are the priests and officers. That the service of Mars and that of the Prince of Peace are considered equally desirable in Greece is evident from the fact that there are over eight thousand priests to a population of two million, and that there is one officer to every twelve men in the army. The concentration of all classes in such a city as

Athens causes one to meet at every turn a group of officers or a priest in his stately flowing robe and tall, thatched hat. The priests wear their hair and beards long, that they may be as distinct as possible from the Western clergy, and they perhaps marry for the same reason—though a bishop must be a single man. On official occasions they let down their long back hair, of which they are often justly proud. Papas Ioannes Pappageorgios, now located at the village of Poros, has reddish-brown hair which flows in a magnificent waving mane nearly to his hips. He is a sort of male Lady Godiva. All the ceremonials of the Greek Church are pompous and impressive to the highest degree attainable, and the wardrobe of the priest is adequate to his entire *répertoire*.

Marriage and death furnish the most picturesque processions. The *dot* system prevails, and unions are usually arranged on business principles. The bride's proeka, or dowry, consists of furniture and other useful articles as well as of money, and these are carried to the residence selected for the young couple by a frolic throng of friends, headed by music—usually a couple of violins and a guitar. When the parties are sufficiently wealthy, carriages are hired and piled full of beds and bedding, chairs, wardrobes, bureaus, cooking utensils, etc. A special display is made of the silk pillows which the bride has embroidered with her own fair hands. A separate carriage is devoted to these, and they are arranged conspicuously on the seats.

A Wedding Among the People.

The possibility of getting an unexpected view of the corpse, which is carried exposed in a shallow coffin, renders a Greek funeral procession a spectacle which nervous foreigners would do well to avoid. Old men and women arrayed in sombre black, young girls and children in white and half buried in flowers—all the dead are thus borne for the last time through the streets of the city which has been their home. You are perhaps stopping at one of the hotels, and hear the solemn music of the dead march. You run to the window and look down and there, turned toward you in the awful calm of death, is a face of marble whiteness and a rigid form, the poor helpless hands crossed upon the breast. In former times high dignitaries of the Church were borne to the grave seated in a chair placed upon an elevated platform. But this display was too spectacular even for the Athenians, and it was finally abandoned. The coffin-lid, upholstered with richly embroidered silk and hung with a huge wreath, is carried at the head of the processions, which derive additional pomp from the numerous banners and symbols of the Church held high in air. Priests, relatives, and mourners follow on foot, and the men sitting at the cafés or in the open doors rise, remove their hats and cross themselves as the corpse passes. In the case of an officer in the army, his charger, caparisoned in black, is led with him on this last expedition of all.

It may interest the reader to know that Greek coffins are merely shallow crates and that the lid does

A Funeral Procession.

not close down, but rests upon the body. This arrangement allows the latter to come in direct contact with the earth and facilitates dissolution. This process is supposed in the popular mind to indicate, by its rapidity or slowness, the state attained by the soul of the departed in the other world. Graves are usually rented in the Athens cemeteries for a space of years. At the expiration of the term the remains are dug up, and the bones are cleaned and put into a bag, which is labelled with the name and dates of birth and death. If the bones are found to be completely denuded of flesh, the soul is thought to be in paradise, and superstition has it that in the case of saints they have a fragrant smell. There is a pious wish, frequently heard, "May your bones smell like myrrh!" A dead person is always referred to, by a pious euphemism, as "*Ὁ Μακαρίτης*," The Blessed One, which is certainly more cheerful than our unchristian "late."

The procession of Good Friday should be mentioned while we are on the subject, for it is in reality a public, official representation of the funeral of Christ. Processions set out from the various churches by night, carrying all the sacred banners and emblems. They are led by a number of priests escorting an embroidered velvet figure of the Christ and followed by an interminable line of mourners, bearing lighted candles. The principal procession starts from the Metropolitan church, and is furnished with a squad of soldiers who march with reversed arms and with a military band

that plays a dirge. Sometimes two or three long lines of lighted candles can be seen at the same time, winding down toward Constitution Square from different parts of the city. This ceremony brings the personality of Christ home with great vividness to the common people, occurring as it does at a time when long fasting has rendered them peculiarly susceptible to impressions of an emotional or imaginative nature. The Greeks are honest and grim fasters. There are about one hundred and fifty-three fast days out of the three hundred and sixty-five, when life is sustained by means of bread and green olives, red caviare, garlic, sea urchins (echini), ink fish, lobsters, and such other denizens of the sea as are popularly thought to be "without blood."

Greek ritual worship reaches its high tide on the eve before Easter, at which time services are conducted in the Metropolitan church by the Metropolitan himself. Quite early in the evening the worshippers begin to arrive at the sacred edifice, which is soon filled to stifling, and a great throng gathers in the square without, where a platform has been erected, that is filled early in the evening by Greek lay dignitaries and official foreigners. The service is long and impressive, but through it all the vast audience is awaiting the moment when the venerable priest shall light his candle, symbolical of the light which shall break upon the eyes of the dead in Christ when they arise from the tomb. As the hour of midnight approaches, the

eagerness of the throng in the square becomes more and more intense. At last a sigh of relief is heard. Someone clinging to a pillar or sitting upon the steps of the platform has seen within the church. They are lighting their candles there, they are coming out. Sporadic tips of flame flicker into being at far distances apart, they bloom in solid patches like little wind-blown stars scampering in troops into the sky, the streets become rivers of twinkling candles, they wink and flare in a hundred windows. The venerable Metropolitan, superb in flowing robes and vestments embroidered in gold, emerges from the church with his suite and mounts to the platform. A hush falls upon that devout throng and the litany continues. At last the tremendous announcement is made, in a voice of solemn conviction, "Christos Aneste" (Christ is risen), and every candle in the square, in all the tributary streets and in all the windows, is raised and lowered three times, once for the Father, once for the Son, and once for the Holy Spirit. The Easter service is ended, the long fast is over. Great joy seizes upon all hearts and a feeling of brotherhood and love overflows. Women sob in the excess of emotion and enemies kiss each other with the kiss of peace, murmuring, "Christ is risen, He is risen indeed!"

Then the congregation breaks up and goes home, still carrying the lighted candles that soon scatter all over the city, like little lines and squads of moving stars. The first thing the Greek does when he reaches

home is to light, from his candle, the lamp which burns before the eikon, then he breaks the long fast with a dish of soup, made from the entrails and feet of the Easter lamb, seasoned with egg and lemon. But a small portion is taken, for it is necessary to prepare the stomach for the feasting of the morrow. It is a pretty poor Greek who cannot afford at least a piece of lamb on Easter Sunday, although he may not eat meat any other day of the year.

It will be seen that the Church does much toward the entertainment of the people. These theatrical ceremonials will be very interesting and suggestive to the student who remembers that the drama has always had its origin in religion; that it sprung in Greece from the worship of Dionysus, and in England from the mystery plays. To the ordinary observer, theatrical pageants seem very much at home in a kingdom so small that one can well imagine he is observing it from a box or a seat in the parquet—an effect that is heightened by a background of ruins, mediæval churches, crooked streets, and perhaps a chorus of Albanians in ballet-dancing costume—the King's guard—in front of the palace. And ever and anon there is a fanfare announcing that some member of the royal family has started on a drive, or is just returning from one.

V

FROM Athens to Phaleron is the favorite carriage promenade, and when His or Her Majesty sets forth, all the fashion of the city is not far behind. Arrived at the beach the King and Queen or the King and his daughter walk up and down in the most democratic manner possible, usually followed by a fat dachshund.

There are in reality two Phalerons, Old and New. The former is simply an objective point for drives and is most frequented in winter, and then only by the fashionable element. During the months of February and March every pleasant afternoon sees a long cavalcade of vehicles of every sort on the road to Old Phaleron; landaus, drags, barouches, tandems, bicycles. Nor are equestrians wanting to add a picturesque effect to the scene. Many of the young women of Athens are dashing horse riders, and these are often out on the road to Old Phaleron accompanied most frequently by debonair officers of the cavalry. The Princess Maria is an accomplished horse woman, and was often seen in the saddle, escorted by her father, before her marriage. One cannot do much at Old Phaleron in the way of amusement, save to stroll along the beach

and look at the beautiful sea. The place has two or three inns, mere sheds, where sea food can be obtained as well as wine and fruit, and where one may sit on a porch and watch the sun set behind Salamis. There are comparatively few days in the perfect Greek climate

A March Day,
Place de la Constitution.

when driving is impracticable, but the loveliest weather begins in rain-washed, sun-kissed February, when the almond-trees are in bloom and the anemones peep shyly from the ground, here and there. It does not take the first comers long to tell their waiting fellows

that fortune has cast their lot in Greece, beneath the wooing Greek sky, and soon they swarm out fearlessly all over the Attic plain, pale mauve, red, pink, and white.

Poppies, blood red among the green wheat, follow the anemones, and in the full glory of spring there is a riot of wild flowers on either side of the road : poppies, big, yellow, " black-eyed Susans," white daisies, dainty stars of Bethlehem, and a hundred varieties of tiny blossoms that lay patches of color, bright as Persian rugs, upon the green grass and among the olive-trees.

Sunset is the signal for starting home from Old Phaleron, and the long string of carriages and bicycles sets out toward Athens as soon as the purple twilight falls on the encircling hills ; but if it is March, we would do well to delay a little and see the carnival of stars. No other where in the world do the stars come so near to the earth as in Greece, and March is their festal month. They shine with passionate splendor in the lilac sky, as fierce and yet as tender-hearted as great drops of dew in the morning sun. You can see around behind them.

As the season advances and the roads get more and more dusty, the popularity of Old Phaleron decreases. In midsummer, or as soon, in fact, as the sea is fit for bathing, the thoughts of the Athenians, rich and poor, turn longingly to the " new " resort. You may know when the summer is really in full sway, by seeing temporary bath-houses made of shawls, or even mere

screens of clothing, all along the beach. Hoi polloi are taking their annual bath. If you have money and move in the court circle, you should arrive at New Phaleron about sunset, attired for the promenade. Strolling up and down in front of the principal hotel, you will meet nearly everybody worth knowing. Tables are set in the open air, and there is good music yonder. The band-stand is on a platform over the sea, and the strains of the latest Italian airs and of operas half-forgotten in America, come to your ears, mingled with the soothing "fluff, fluff" of the waves. There are excellent bathing establishments here, and we can take a dip in the brine before dinner. After dark the electric lights are turned on and a gay throng dines by the very skirts of the sea. There are usually a number of war-vessels in the harbor—English, Russian, French, Greek, or American—and they amuse themselves by whipping into momentary life with their searchlights the sleeping Parthenon or the distant hills. There is a theatre at New Phaleron, wherein a fair company produces Italian operas.

Don't forget to go to New Phaleron on the open tram. That is the pleasantest route, and it is also the most fashionable, as it is patronized by the royal family, who take their places and pay their four cents fare in the most democratic manner imaginable.

I have spoken of going to Phaleron on a bicycle. There are numerous other, longer, excursions by wheel that are possible from Athens; for instance, to Marou-

Near an old Mosque.

si, Kephissia, Tatoi, Eleusis, Marathon, Corinth. The three places first mentioned are all on the same route, and you can get an excellent dinner, with good wine, at any of them. Kephissia is another fashionable resort, with a big hotel. At Tatoi, the King's country place, there is a small inn, where refreshment may be had, and where one may take board for a week, but no longer. Tatoi, being well up in the mountains, is deliciously cool in the summer-time. The road there is excellent, as roads leading to a king's property are apt to be. By doing a little climbing, one can keep right on over the mountains to Oropos on the Euripus, opposite the ancient city of Eretria, excavated several years ago by the American school. The road to Marathon, twenty-five miles, is not good, but is passable for bicycles in good weather. To Corinth, sixty miles, about, is a most satisfactory and interesting run for a practical devotee of the wheel. The route leads through Eleusis and the city of Megara, ancient mother of Constantinople—as it is called now—and for miles along a cliff that overlooks the vividly blue waters of the Saronic gulf. In Corinth is a little hotel of fragrant memory, kept by one Pelopides, justly famed for his savory pilaffs, for his modern bath-rooms, and for the cleanness and comfort of his beds. If one wishes, he can ship his wheel back to Athens from Corinth, and return by train.

Dogs are the one great pest of the bicyclist in Greece. As soon as you get out of the city limits of

Athens you must keep the horizon in your eye. If there is a shepherd and his flock a mile away, you are sure to see a small cloud of dust rapidly approaching you across the field. That is the dog and he will bite you if you stay on your wheel. If you descend and pick up a stone, you will have no trouble in driving him off. Greek shepherd dogs have a fear of stones that is out off all proportion to their general courage. If one has bitten you and your heart is full of revenge, satisfaction is easily encompassed. Put two or three stones in an outside coat pocket and wait until the dog is almost upon you. Then step from your wheel. He has up till this moment supposed you to be some new sort of centaur. His surprise, on seeing you thus come in two and resolve yourself into a machine and a man, will render him motionless, and you can lodge your rock at leisure. If you succeed in planting it squarely in his ribs, you will have performed a genuine service for the next bicyclist who may come along. This may seem cruel, but the dogs of Greece really need civilizing.

Kephissia, a few miles up in the mountains, and Phaleron, are often referred to as the "two lungs" of Athens. There are many fine villas at both places, and their contiguity to the capital renders it possible to get out of the heat at any time in less than an hour.

Foreigners must obtain their ideas of Greek customs and character mostly from the public and out-of-door manifestations. There are but three or four Greek

houses in all Athens open to them, a form of exclusiveness which was inflicted upon the English during the occupancy of Corfu, and which occasioned much bitter criticism. My knowledge of the Greek character leads me to believe that they keep their doors shut from shyness rather than from motives of economy. The Greek cannot quite rid himself of so many hundreds of years of Turkish influence, and his house has borrowed seclusion from the harem. You may stay for weeks in a country village without ever seeing a pretty young girl. But do not deceive yourself: many a roguish pair of eyes has been "taking stock" of you through closed shutters, and if your bearing lacks in the least essential of dignity you have been the subject of uncomplimentary laughter; for the Greek maiden hath a shrewd wit and is much given to ridicule. In Athens the married ladies of wealth, who have travelled abroad, go about with more freedom, but the girls are ferociously chaperoned. The window-cushion is found in all the houses, a long pillow upon which the ladies rest their elbows while they gaze down into the street. Hours are spent in this occupation, which is quite typical of the peasant's ideal of a lady—a woman who has nothing to do. Indeed, there is a saying among the poor people, "She sits on her balcony and eats pumpkin seeds." But I would not convey the idea that the "New Woman" is entirely unknown in Athens. She has made her appearance there and, so far, is doing a world of good. Her example is putting her charming

sisters more and more in touch with the Western world, where they belong. Mrs. Calirrhoe Parren is editor of a woman's paper, the *Ephemeris ton Kyrion* (The Ladies' Journal), which advocates increased education and independence on the part of women ; and Maria Kalopothakes, daughter of the missionary, is an excellent surgeon, who has a hospital of her own and treats the poor free of charge.

The principal shopping street of Athens is appropriately named " Hermes " after the ancient god of commerce and barter. Here are the shops frequented by the ladies, where they obtain about the same variety of goods, imported from Paris and London, that are found in American stores. Midway in Hermes Street is a quaint and picturesque Byzantine church, one of the oldest in the city, and from this, to right and to left, branch off two other streets, dear to the heart of the orthodox Greek. One of them is known to foreigners as " The Street of the Candles " because here are the shops where candles are sold for baptisms, funerals, weddings, and church services. You may see them hanging by the wick in rows in the windows and in front of the shops, many of them of huge size and covered with ornamental designs.

In this same neighborhood the dealers in baptismal outfits have their shops. In Greece, the godfather bears all the expenses of the baptism, including the fees of priests, nurses, etc. He must also buy the clothing in which the little one is first arrayed, as well

as floria or other souvenirs for the guests. As the population of Greece is rapidly increasing, it will readily be seen that baptismal paraphernalia are in brisk demand. You can obtain an entire little suit for your godchild, from cunning cap to tiny gold cross, neatly put up in a box, for prices ranging from forty drachmas to one thousand.

Eikons can be bought in this same street, as cheap or as expensive as you desire. Some are mere daubs upon bits of board—fatheaded Greek babies supposed to represent the infant Christ, held stiffly in the arms of round-featured virgins. In the case of the more expensive eikons, the figures are covered with a sheet of polished silver or even of gold, with openings that allow the faces and hands to be seen. The favorite saints, too, are in great demand: Spiridon, Nikolas, Elias, George, Elene, Paraskeve, for these have special care over the people who are named after them, and also, like the gods of old, they are patrons of various industries, or are sympathetic in particular emergencies. The dealers in eikons also sell offerings for the churches, legs and arms of silver or gold, internal organs, images of babies, etc. If your baby is sick, or your leg, or your liver, you ask the Virgin or St. Nikolas or some other saint for help, promising, in case your prayer is answered, to hang up in some church an image of the object cured or saved. If your case be desperate, you may promise an image every year for a long term of years; but be sure not to

make any vows that you cannot fulfil, for if you fail, the offended saint is likely to take a terrible revenge. The θαυματουργός, or miracle-working virgin of Tenos, is the one most frequently called upon, and the gold and silver images annually left in the church there form a source of immense revenue. The place often looks like a toy dissecting-room. Our Athenian cook, Anna, once saved her boy's life by calling upon this virgin, just as the little rascal was falling from a balcony. He has nearly broken her heart since, but she goes to Tenos regularly every year with a little silver baby, which she hangs up in the church, and which the monks just as regularly melt up along with ten thousand other offerings and sell for good coin. Should Anna forget one year to make the promised offering, Vassili would surely die. People suffering from fever must call upon St. John, those who have small-pox upon St. Barbara, women in child-birth must seek the assistance of St. Elevtheria, and persons in danger of drowning would do well to turn to St. Nikolas in their distress.

Artificial funeral wreaths, of enormous size and frequently made of violets, may be either rented or bought. Bridal wreaths are displayed in boxes, in pairs. They must be bought, as they are hung up in the bedchamber after the ceremony as a permanent ornament, something as marriage certificates are sometimes framed and hung in the country regions of America.

The priests' tailors are a feature of Evangellistria, the other of the two streets of which I spoke. Their sign is a pair of crossed scissors and a huge priest's hat. These shops may also be known by the strips of gold and silver embroidery in their windows and the bolts of purple and black cloth. The painters of eikons are also to be found on Evangellistria Street.

But there are modern stores in Athens, too, where one finds all the latest electrical devices, the pattern of cloth worn most recently by the Prince of Wales and the most recent Yankee invention—anything in fact, except a wooden chopping-bowl or a man's shirt that buttons behind. Coming from the quaint, mediæval quarter into a London or German emporium on Stadium Street, is like jumping from the Middle Ages into the present century.

Shopping is a more elaborate, time-consuming and minute process even than with us. The Oriental method of doing business still prevails. The dealer sets a price, the buyer another, and often three or four hours of patient will contest pass before a compromise is reached. The patron asks "How is this piece of silk?" "One dollar a yard" is the reply. "Thirty cents" is offered. The merchant is thrown into something resembling an apoplectic fit. He swears by his father's soul that it cost ninety-five cents. The lady takes a seat with a sigh, and after twenty minutes, inquires, innocently, "Finally, thirty cents?" "Never!

But to keep you and not lose your custom, you may have it for what I paid, ninety-five cents." "Kaiemeni!" sighs the lady, sarcastically (You poor thing)! There are a dozen or more women sitting about the store. When finally the proprietor comes down to a price that one is willing to pay, she rises, receives her bundle and departs, declaring, good-naturedly, that she has been swindled, and that she will never come back again. The business part of the town is largely composed of streets devoted to single industries. Thus the brass workers are all together on a thoroughfare appropriately called Hephæstus Street. They hammer out of brass such things as cooking implements, dippers for making coffee, tall candle-sticks. The din of their pounding is deafening. "Shoe Lane" is a quaint, narrow street, much frequented by tourists. It is festooned with tsaroukia, the shoes worn by the peasantry, with elaborately ornamented belts, tobacco-pouches and similar articles, which the workmen make sitting at their benches in wide-open doors.

Visitors to Athens suffer no such annoyance from cabmen, couriers, guides, beggars, etc., as in other European cities—Naples, for instance, where the whole population falls upon the foreigner like a swarm of pestilent flies. There is no one to follow you or solicit you. The city, moreover, is well policed. The officers of the army, as well as the police, are guardians of the public peace, and it would not be possible for a

native to dog a foreigner, as the shameless Neapolitans do. At the least sign of any sort of a disturbance, officers appear on the instant, as if they had sprung from the ground. In taking a cab, it is well to arrange about price in advance. The large majority of the Jehus are honest, and are saints compared with their American brethren, but it is a matter of prudence to be on the look-out for the possible exception. The regular rates within the city limits are one drachma the course and three drachmas the hour, until midnight. Cabs after midnight are expensive in Athens, as elsewhere.

I know of no city in the world that has so few beggars as Athens. The Greek is too proud by nature to take kindly to soliciting alms. Those that do exist take up the business as a profession, and are a sort of annex to the Church. They exemplify the saying of Christ, "The poor ye have with ye always," and are cheap and convenient objects for the practice of Christian charity. Despite the existence of the one lepton piece (one-fifth of a cent), kept in circulation solely for the beggars, many of them are wealthy. For the benefit of those contemplating a trip to Athens, I will mention that the only effective way to rid one's self of a beggar is to jerk the head backward or slightly to elevate the eyebrows—the way that the gods said "No" in Homeric times.*

I have spoken mostly about Greek Athens, because

* ἀνένευε δὲ παλλάς, Iliad, 6, 311.

that is the phase of the city which one cannot know without long residence in the shadow of the Acropolis —certainly not without a speaking command of the language. As for the hotels, the public buildings, the museums, the more important of the ancient monuments, behold, are they not written down in the chronicles of Murray and Baedeker? In many respects Athens is the most delightful of all Mediterranean towns, as a place of residence. It is, as it was in Roman times, a sentimental capital and a resort of scholars. One is sure to meet there, sooner or later, on terms of charming intimacy, the best of the world's scholars, writers, artists, sculptors, and architects. The diplomatic set is the same as the diplomatic set in all other capitals, and the circle of interesting people thus brought together is augmented by the archæological institutes of France, Germany, England, and the United States.

The American Institute of Classical Studies is a beautiful building whose balconies command a view of Hymettus, the Attic plain and the distant sea. Its learned director, Dr. Rufus B. Richardson, has greatly distinguished himself by his discoveries at Corinth, where the school is now carrying on excavations. Rich people who wish to advance the cause of science and sustain the lustre of the American name in a peaceful field, should not forget this most excellent and ably conducted institute. They should emulate the example of Dr. Joseph Clark Hoppin of Bryn Mawr, who has

recently founded a scholarship for young women wishing to finish their studies at Athens, and of other

The Nike Apteros and the Propylæa, Acropolis.

enlightened gentlemen who have made contributions to the excavation fund. Under most favorable circumstances the Americans must be wide awake to keep

pace with Drs. Dorpfeldt and Homolle of the German and French schools. Nor are the Greeks themselves behind in this branch of investigation, led as they are by the able and energetic Dr. Kavvadias, to whose labors are largely due the fact that the National Museum is admirably arranged and contains treasures of inestimable value. Herein many lectures of the various schools are given, and rooms are let furnished to students. Much of the work on a great publication that is soon to be brought out by American students under the direction of Professor Charles Waldstein, embodying the results of the excavations at the Argive Heræum, has been done in a room of the Athens museum. Mr. Herbert De Cou, formerly instructor in Sanscrit, and later in Greek at the University of Michigan, is working there now on the bronze department of the book. He was sent over by the Archæological Society of America.

The main difficulty in the way of learning the modern Greek tongue is found in the fact that the teachers are nearly all anxious to air their knowledge of the ancient language, and they impart to their pupils a hodgepodge that is neither the one thing nor the other. This difficulty is increased by the absolute worthlessness of the dictionaries, which are pedantic compilations from the ancient lexicons. Eugene Rangave's text-book, recently published by Ginn & Co., is a fair book for beginners, and I can confidently recommend my old teacher, Professor

Charilaos Poulios, of Democritus Street, to anyone desiring the services of an intelligent and skilful man. Unfortunately, the professor does not know any English. Sixty drachmas a month is sufficient remu-

Choragic Monument of Lysicrates.

neration for any of the teachers. Those seeking more are frauds, in many instances.

The classical graduate of one of our colleges should be able to read news items in the daily papers almost

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from the start. The editorials are a different matter. There are about fifty papers printed in the city, daily, weekly, and monthly, of which the principal are the *Asty*, *Acropolis*, and *Neologos*, each morning; the *Estia* and *Ephemeris*, afternoon sheets, and the *Kodon* and *Romeos*, weeklies. The *Acropolis* claims a daily circulation of ten thousand.

The *Acropolis* is the liveliest of the Athenian dailies, with a policy that renders it comparable with a progressive American sheet. It has the best foreign news service and its editorials are fearless. Its savage criticisms of the army several years ago so enraged the officers that a number of them fell upon the editorial rooms and wrecked them.

There is not much solidarity among the literary workers of Athens, nor does there exist any school of enthusiasts as in London or Paris. A few names, however, are worthy of mention, of men who are working along original lines and interpreting the native life and character. Demetrious Bikelas is known in America for his " Tales of the Ægean," which has been translated into English. His short story, " The Plain Sister," should be included in all collections, however limited in number, which aim to give the best short stories of modern literature. Mr. Bikelas is wealthy and resides, during a portion of each year, in a pretty house which he has recently built. He speaks English perfectly. His translations from Shakespeare are the best that exist in modern Greek.

George Drosines is the author of many poems and several novels, among which are "A Campaigner's Tales," "The Herb of Love," "Amaryllis."

George Soures is, perhaps, the best known of Athenians among the Athenians themselves. He is editor of a satirical weekly, *Soures's Romeos*, written entirely in verse, even to the date and the advertisements. He has a biting wit, encyclopædic knowledge, a keen gift of ridicule, and remarkable facility in versification. He is familiarly known as "The Modern Aristophanes," and is a real power in a land where ridicule is feared even more than bullets.

Among the modern playwrights the one man who has written tragedy worthy of comparison with, say, that of Sardou, is Demetrius Vernardakes, the famous philologist. His "Fausta" is a work of considerable merit. There are a host, too, of minor poets, and many of them have written songs that have caught the popular fancy, and are sung by moonlight by the fishermen of the Ægean, or at early dawn by the lone watchers of the vineyards. Is there a Greek living who does not know "To Proto Astro," by Ioannes Polemes? I can think of nothing that brings back to my mind more sweetly the land of purple sunsets, of glorious moonlights, of great memories, of softest skies, of all enfolding seas. I hear it now in fancy, sung by students to the soft throbbing of a guitar. I smell again the breath of the pepper-trees that line the street of beautiful Queen Amaliea, long dead, and

I hear the ecstasy of the nightingales deep in the King's garden :

NIGHT'S FIRST STAR.

The first of all the stars of night
  In heaven is shyly beaming,
The waves play in their gowns of white
  While mother sea lies dreaming.

Among the leaves on gentle wing
  A balmy zephyr flutters,
The nightingale begins to sing
  And all love's sorrow utters.

For you the zephyr sighs, my love,
  In passion low and tender,
For you the little stars above
  Dispense their yearning splendor.

For you the tiny waves, ashore
  Their garnered foam are bridging;
For you his love-song, o'er and o'er,
  The nightingale is singing.

For you from yonder mountain high
  The moon pours out her measure,
For you all day I moan and sigh,
  My little dear, my treasure !

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